

**FRANK DIED AT
HANDS OF
UNKNOWN, IS
VERDICT**

Coroner's Jury,
Impanelled at

Marietta, Completes
Inquest

Into Lynching

MARIETTA, Ga., Aug. 24—Without being able to elicit from any one of eleven Witnesses a single clue as to the Identity of any

person connected with the Lynching of Leo M. Frank, near this City last Tuesday morning, the Coroner's Jury empanelled to inquire into the matter rendered a verdict today that Frank came to his Death by hanging at the hands of Parties unknown.

"Of course, you know these things are kept pretty close and are hard to find out," said Mayor E. P. Dobbs, of Marietta.

Deputy Sheriff Hicks and City Marshal Looney stated they were working hard on the Case, but at this time could throw no light on the Identity of the Parties who participated in the Lynching.

The nearest disclosure as to what happened in the Oak Grove near the Frey gin came from J. A. Benson, a Marietta Merchant, who drove by the Place soon after the Lynching Party had parked its Automobiles by the Roadside and had led Frank to the tree where Death awaited him.

Mr. Benson said he had a "pretty good suspicion" as to what was going on, but he did not stop to see it and he didn't recognize anybody in the Party.

TEXT OF VERDICT.

The text of the Jury verdict was as follows:

"State of Georgia, Cobb County—taken this 17th day of August, 1915, and completed this 24th day of August, 1915, before John A. Booth, Coroner of said County, upon the body of Leo M. Frank, who was hanged by the neck until dead in a cluster of woods about two miles east of Marietta, in said County, and near what is known as W. J. Frey's gin, on the Roswell Public Road, upon the Oaths of Dr. W. H. Perkinson, J. N. Gantt, J. A. G. Heard, B. V. Greer, J. F. Shaw and G. A. Griffin, sworn according to Law as Jurors and charged by John A. Booth to inquire when and

how and in what manner the said Leo M. Frank came to his Death; that the said Jurors aforesaid make and return the following presentments in Reference to the aforesaid matters and things concerning which we were sworn to inquire by the said John A. Booth, Coroner. We attach the evidence adduced at this Inquiry to this our Inquisition, and make the same a part of it."

"We, the Jurors aforesaid, upon our oath, say that Leo M. Frank did on the 17th day of August, 1915, in said County, come to his Death by being hanged by the neck until dead, by unknown Parties."

GRAND JURY CALLED.

Judge H. L. Patterson, of the Blue Ridge Circuit, has called a Special Meeting of the Cobb County Grand Jury for 9 a.m. on September 1 to investigate the Frank Lynching. The members of the Jury as follows: J.H. Mabrey, M.E. Jefferson, M.S. Austin, W.B. Groover, W. J. Bishop, J.F. Collins, W.H. Crowder, James T. Anderson, foreman.

Dr. C. D. Elder was the first Witness called to the Stand. He testified to viewing the body of Frank while it was still hanging in the Oak Grove, near the Frey gin. Dr. Elder did not know Frank personally, but was told the body was his. He was not present when the body was cut down. When he arrived on the Scene of the Lynching, the body was still warm.

"Do you know any of the circumstances surrounding the Hanging?" asked Mr. Dorsey.

"Absolutely nothing," replied the Witness.

"You were among the first to reach the Scene?"

"Yes, sir."

“How many people were present when you arrived?”

“Perhaps half a dozen.”

“Do you know who they were?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Please name them,” requested Mr. Gann.

“As I came up, two men were running out of the woods. One of them was Joe Carter and the other was a man they told me was representing the As-

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FRANK DIED AT HANDS OF UNKNOWN, IS VERDICT

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sociated Press. I also saw Mr. W. J. Frey, E. L. Robinson and W. A. Sams”

“Was Frank dead?”

"Yes, sir. The Death Rigor had not set in, however."

NO MUTILATION OF BODY.

"Was there any mutilation of the body?"

"No, sir. The only mark I saw was the cut in the neck had been opened by the rope."

Dr. W. M. Kemp, another Physician, testified that Frank's Death was due to strangulation.

"Do you know anything about the Commission of this Act?" asked Mr. Dorsey.

"Nothing whatever."

"That's all."

J. Bart Wing, a Cobb County Commissioner, was the next Witness. He also was among the first to reach the Scene of the Lynching after the body was discovered.

"Do you know anything about the Hanging?" he was asked.

"Nothing."

"Is there anything you would like to State to the Jury?"

Mr. Wing hesitated for a moment. Then he said:

"Nothing, except that that morning on the Road, I saw several Automobiles on the Roswell Road going in the Direction of Marietta."

"What time was this?"

"Between 6:30 and 7 o'Clock in the morning."

"Where were you at the time?"

"I had been fishing with Bob Cochran, a neighbor. We were in a Buggy, and I had driven my horse into a Creek to water him, when three or four Automobiles went by. We were forty or fifty yards off the Road. Bob Cochran said to me, 'I wonder what all that crowd is?' I said, 'Look like Joy Riders to me'."

"Could you tell who were in the Machines?"

"No, sir; I couldn't tell whether they were Negroes or White People."

W. J. Frey, owner of the Place on which Frank was lynched and regarded as the Star Witness of the Inquest, next was sworn. Mr. Frey, an ex-Sheriff of the County, took the Stand in his shirt sleeves. He is a very large man of about forty-five, with a short brown mustache and florid complexion.

"Mr. Frey," asked Acting Solicitor Dorsey, "did you know Leo M. Frank?"

"I attended his trial in Atlanta two days, but I did not know him."

"You were among the first to discover the body?"

"Well, sir, when I got there with Gus Benson and Walter Gann, there wasn't anybody in the Grove but Leo M. Frank."

"When did you first know anything had happened that morning?"

"I think it was about 5 o'Clock that morning my brother telephoned me the State Prison Farm had been broken into and Frank taken out."

"What did you do then?"

"Didn't do anything, but went on about my Business at home. Walter Gann, a traveling man from Augusta, was visiting at my Place. I live right on the Main Road. Mr. Gann and I were in the field about 6:30 or 7 o'Clock when three or four Automobiles came whizzing by the Place. They were about 40 yards apart."

"How fast were they going?"

"Well, sir, they were coming along pretty pert; I should say 25 or 30 miles an hour."

"Then what happened?"

"Well, sir, having heard about the break at the Prison Farm, it popped right up into my mind, there was something doing in the way of Frank."

SEEN FRANK IN AUTO.

Mr. Frey said the man he afterward found out was Frank, was seated in the rear seat of one of the passing Cars, a man being on either side of him.

"How was Frank dressed?"

"Looked as if he had on a thin shirt of some sort. He was bareheaded."

"Did you know at the time this man was Frank?"

"I thought it was him, but I couldn't recognize him."

"Did you recognize any of the other Parties in the Cars?"

"No, sir."

"Do you know now who they were?"

"No, sir."

“Were they masked?”

“No, sir, but they all wore goggles and their faces were covered with red dust.”

“I turned to Walter Gann and said, ‘Let’s go to the house. There’s something going to be doing.’ We went to the house and Mrs. Frey had breakfast ready for us in about five minutes. We ate and I got my Car started and we put out for Marietta.”

Mr. Frey said he passed the actual Scene of the Hanging without noticing anything out of the way.

FINDS FRANK’S BODY.

“I had no idea anything had happened that close to my home. So, I came on to Town but did not see anything yet. I went to the Cemetery where Mary Phagan is buried, but there was nothing there. I came back into Marietta and met Gus Benson who said: ‘Bill, those Automobiles turned in the Road by your gin.’ I drove right back to the gin and when we reached the Oak Grove there was the body of Frank hanging.”

“What did you do then?”

“I looked at him but didn’t put my hands on him.”

“Is there any further light you can throw on this Transaction?”

“No, sir; I’ve told you all I saw and all I know.”

Frey was excused.

J. A. Benson, a Marietta Merchant, known as Gus Benson, was the next Witness. He drove in from the Country some minutes after the Lynching Party passed the Frey Place.

"Driving on into Town I saw three or four Cars parked near the Frey gin," said Mr. Benson.

"Did you stop?"

"No, sir."

"What did you see?"

"I saw one man step out of one of the Cars."

"Did you recognize him?"

"No, sir, emphatically."

"Did you recognize anybody in any of the Cars?"

"No, sir; I was going by pretty fast."

"You then came on into Town and met Mr. Frey?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, where did you get the idea Frank had been hanged there at the gin?"

"From the Cars there, and what I heard when I passed the Frey Place."

"It was a guess then?"

"Well, sir, when I came by the Frey Place, Bill called to me that he thought there was something doing. I had seen in the Morning Paper about what had happened at the Prison Farm. So, it all excited my suspicion."

"Did you see again or recognize any of the Machines you passed at the gin?"

"No, sir."

“Is there any further light you can throw on this Case?”

“No, sir.”

H.H. Looney, City Marshal of Marietta said he knew nothing of the Lynching until after the body was discovered.

“You are bending your best efforts to discover who took part in this Transaction?” suggested Mr. Dorsey.

“Yes, sir.”

“Well, is there any light you can throw on the situation at this time?”

“No, sir, this Transaction was really outside the City Limits, but we are co-operating with the County Officials.”

“No, sir. On Monday night we always have two Nigger Dances in Town. I stay up late that night, for these Dances generally always end up in a row. I saw nothing unusual or suspicious last Monday night, although I was up until 2 a.m.”

MAYOR DOBBS ON STAND.

Mayor E. P. Dobbs, of Marietta, who is also a State Senator, said that when he first heard of the Lynching, he thought the story was a hoax.

“I met Deputy Sheriff Hicks,” said the mayor, “and asked him about it. He said he knew nothing. I suggested that we get a Car and go out to the Frey gin, although I thought at the time that when we got back the Town folk would have a good laugh on us. I didn’t believe we would find Frank, but when we got to the Oak Thicket there, he was hanging by the neck.”

“Deputy Sheriff Hicks took charge of the situation. We have done all in our Power to find out who composed the Party that

hanged Frank. I told Marshal Looney to instruct the entire Police Force to get all the information possible, and report to me the slightest clue.”

“Have you received a Report?”

“No, sir, not yet.”

“Is there anything else you would like to say?”

“I have seen in the Papers that a lot of Automobiles were missing from Marietta the morning of the Lynching. The truth is we didn’t miss a single Car. I have no idea whether Marietta people or Country people were engaged in this Transaction. I do not believe the Marietta people are any more responsible for this than people of the County or any other County. We don’t know who did this. It may have been people from another County who brought Frank to this County.”

“DOING ALL WE CAN.”

“We are doing all we can, Gentlemen, but of course you know these things are hard to find out.”

Charles Mell and W. L. Gray were on the Scene of the Lynching soon after it happened, but saw no one connected with it. Gray said he saw Automobiles “going both ways” along the Road early in the morning, but paid no attention to them.

Deputy Sheriff Hicks stated to the Jury that he and Sheriff Swanson were doing all in their Power to discover the persons “engaged in the Transaction.” He said he searched Marietta the day of the Lynching, but could find no Cars that bore evidence of having been on a long Journey.

The Jury then retired and three minutes later returned its verdict.

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